PLANT FACT SHEET

Senegalia ataxacantha (DC.) Kyalangaliwa & Boatwr.

GENUS *Senegalia* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Flame acacia, Flame thorn

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Gum

The gum is occasionally eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A climber or straggling herb. It is usually thorny. It has several stems. It forms thickets. It can be a small tree to 10 m high. The branches are flexible. It loses its leaves during the year. The leaves have 10-25 pairs of leaf stalks each with 14-62 pairs of leaflets. The leaflets are 2-5 mm long by 0.5-1.5 mm wide. The flowers are creamy white in spikes 10 cm long. The fruit are young pods which are red then turn brown. They are slender and 20 cm long by 2.4 cm wide. They taper at both ends.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It grows among sand dunes and in open wooded grassland. It grows in hot arid areas. It can probably tolerate frost when it has shed its leaves. It grows in acid soils. It grows in areas with an annual rainfall between 200-1,200 mm. It grows between 100-1,980 m above sea level. It can grow in arid places. It grows in the Sahel.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from seed. Seeds often have a hard seed coat and germinate more easily if soaked in warm water.

NOTES

There are about 1,350 Acacia species. Over 1,000 occur in Australia. Also as Mimosaceae.

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